769 2. M fa faro n so ma bana a dyanza ye kle saba kono ye; ni ye se i ka seki, muso kono ma.

The offering of food is then renewed every three days until a birth brings about the return of the double into the world of the living.

If the dead man has no descendants, his altar remains forever in the sanctuary of the Komo near the nimara boli. Otherwise, it is returned within seven days to the eldest son or to the brother who then becomes the head of the family.

769 During the night following the seventh day, the soul returns to eat
775 and drink in the hut of the widow who lives alone. All the dishes containing water or food are therefore carefully emptied and cleaned. The same meal is offered to the deceased the night following the fortieth day after the death. The widow comes out of her house on the [765] eighth day if she is poor and must work for a living; otherwise, on the forty-first day.

At the end of a variable period of time, the soul, the double, and the name of the deceased are received by a child who is born into the family. The exuvia, mana or folo of the soul, remains in the sanctuary of the Komo as a permanent testimony to his existence on earth. It is conserved by Faro who watches over it, and maintained by the offerings of the living who will in this way bring it to the final resurrection.

When the deceased does not belong to the Komo society, the rites are celebrated over the altars of the societies to which he belongs; his soul is likewise conserved by them. The spiritual principles /195/ of the women, grouped in institutions comparable to those of men, called muso dye, are the object of the same attentions in which is found the rhythm of four days, the female number.

766 If the deceased was too poor for all the rituals, which are always costly, to be observed, two gourds of water are prepared and placed one at the head, the other at the feet of the corpse; he is then lifted in such a way that his image is reflected in the water. This accomplished, eight cowrie shells are placed at his head and eight at his feet and the gourds are covered with a winnowing tray; the image thus conserved is supposedly reflected in the kaba mana, the fourth sky, where Faro,
776 symbolized by the cowrie shells, passes judgment on its state of purity.
787 A divining rite is then performed. If the man is pure, the villagers

*173
[172]

consisting of a rectangular pillar worn away by the rains.

[765] According to custom, the members of the ton' settled down in front of the deceased's house for a week, singing, dancing and generally carousing in the usual way.

When this traditional period was over, Mamari asked them to enclose his father's and his mother's houses within a single wall. They set to work and built a wall with only one door, [622] over which they placed the pyramidal ornaments used only for chiefs' doorways. Within the enclosure they left the existing division in two parts, and it was henceforth understood that the part formerly occupied by Mamari's father would be reserved for people from Doukounna when they wished to stay in Ségou.

Kassoum was determined to show that he had been properly brought up and knew how to return courtesy; so, one day, he invited Mamari to a drinking party, planned especially in his honor. Mamari accepted and, on arriving, found that Kassoum, from impatience no doubt, had started the celebration so far ahead that he was already dead drunk.

According to the usual custom, Mamari ordered one of the [273] ton-den', as it was his duty, to taste the dlo first (2). Lacking

2. A precautionary measure to guard against poison.

a utensil in which to pour a small quantity of the beer, the taster sipped from the crock itself. Kassoum jumped up in a fury, crying out that the ton-den' was a disgusting person, and [37] broke a gourd full of beer over the fellow's head. In turn, Mamari became angry at Kassoum, whose manners struck him as coarse and intolerable. Then, after much invective on both sides, Mamari left the place to return home. Kassoum took up his bow and arrows and set out after Mamari. However, since he was slowed down by his drunkenness, he could not go far and his arrows missed their mark. Mamari returned to Ségou and, for the first time, installed himself in his father's house.

764 period is sometimes reduced to three days, but a week conforms more to custom, as is shown by the Ségou chronicle cited earlier.

All this takes place "at the door of the dead," at the blon'-da, as the natives call it, that is, at the very place where the elder was wont to sit and where offerings were made to the ancestors. It is believed that the soul of the departed is there and will be gratified amidst this abundance honoring him and testifying to his kindness and also to his power. In the minds of the Bambara these repasts of communion form a very strong bond among those who partake of them. The act of eating consecrated food together is a kind of sacrament which binds the participants to mutual aid. A traitor is doomed to be cursed by the manes.

Magic, of course, can free a person from these bonds and even enable him to profit from these funeral gatherings to further the most nefarious schemes, but that does not alter the concepts on which the dyansa and the sanga-fo are based.

765 783 [824] (d) Mourning. The purification of the hut of the deceased takes place on the eighth day. Women pulverize tree bark -- from the cailcedra (2) especially -- put it in water,

2. Khaya senegalensis.

and sprinkle this liquid about the hut which they then sweep.

They assemble with native brooms, sing, and do a kind of dance step; they collect the dirt and throw it away at a crossroads outside the village (3). The hut may then be re-

3. Preferably at the main crossroads (da-n-kun'-ba-la).

occupied. [172]

765 514 During the eight days following the burial, the daughters of the fa live together in strict seclusion. They spend their days in the blon', where they spin cotton and take their meals. To take care of their natural needs, they go out only in a body;

765 [514] twice a day, morning and evening, they go in procession, their heads covered with caps made of white cloth. They spend the nights together, in a single hut if possible.

[292] The wives of the deceased go out only when it is absolutely necessary during the first moon after the death; they are dressed in white and wear a kind of white hood on their heads and sandals made of goatskin on their feet. At the end [783] of the moon, at night and separately, they go to a sort of purification rite that takes place at the crossroads outside the village.

Up to the fortieth day there is a very gradual return to ordinary life. Then, and only then, the successor to the deceased is finally recognized and installed, as is shown in the chronicle of Ségou.

801 805 In closing, let us note how every ritual sequence rests on periods of time whose real meaning must be sought in magic. The astral religion of the Semites in fact taught that on the third, seventh, and fortieth day after death the moon acts more powerful to destroy the body (1). Apparently some

1. See the meeting of the Academy of Inscriptions and Belles-Lettres of August 9, 1918, paper by Franz Cumont, "La commémoration des morts et l'astrologie [The Commemoration of the Dead and Astrology]," Journal Officiel (1918), p. 7224.

such beliefs must account for the Bambara rites planned precisely according to these numbers. This seems all the more likely since the Sudanese commonly believe that the fortieth day marks the separation of the flesh from the bones of buried corpses.

761 principles of the cadaver on altars or masks in order to preserve them
764 for the community.

The rites have undergone an evolution. Formerly the bodies
764 were hung from trees until they rotted, while the bones were kept. At present the bodies are buried. Only a band of cotton symbolizing the tongue of the deceased, that is, his word, is attached to the
[764] branch of a tree. If the deceased was an initiate of the Komo, the society plays an important role in the funeral rites.

All these rites have been studied by G. Dieterlen and Tauxier.
766 Monteil has described at great length the funeral ceremonies of a chief: the three rifle shots recalling his combats, the lamentations of the women, the notification of the village notables, the offerings of relatives and friends, the alms at the crossroads, and finally, the inhumation. The body is prepared, the head shaved, the interior cleaned with water and salt. A paste of water and ground cowry is put into the body openings (the ground cowries possess a divine spirit assuring the preservation of the cadaver). The body, and particularly the head, is daubed with this same paste, then the body is laid on its right side, feet to the north (a woman would be laid on her left side). Finally, the funeral celebration takes place, with the ritual feast
● 765 and the purifications. Seven days later the celebration of commemoration (Sangha) takes place, followed by the mourning of the women for forty days. After this time the deceased is transformed into a living ancestor.

763 The Bambara receive omens of their death or of a chief's death from certain signs given them in the bush, such as coming across a chameleon on a red anthill, the cry of a certain mythical hyena, the passing of certain crying monkeys or certain birds.

Certain gifted beings have the ability to perceive the departure of a person's spiritual forces and his imminent death. Sometimes they are able to bring back these forces and reinstate them in the body to save the man in danger.

[95] g. Ancestor Worship

769 After his death a man is transformed into a living ancestor
773 and is the object of a cult. The cult is closely connected to the agricultural cults; the ancestors are efficient vital forces which

The great mourning lasts at least three days, and during all this time the people of the village rest (4). From all sides people come

4. For distinguished religious heads (gnéna-n-sonnaba), for example, there are often eight days of rest if the season permits. In the winter this is impossible because there is urgent work.

running in large numbers to be present at the djansa and to keep company with the new head of the family and this is understandable, for however little the family esteems itself, d'lo flows in streams, and [273] the Negroes dread neither travel nor the sun when there is the prospect of gorging themselves with millet beer. At the end of the great mourning, the great sanga fo (5), there is a crowd at the home of the family

5. Sanga fo means "to go and give one's condolences to a family on the occasion of a death."

of the deceased, for all the friends are there to pay their respects for the last time to the departed old man and to install his successor. The women grind false-cedar bark, soak it in water, and spread it in the /223/ hut of the deceased. Armed with a broom of dry straw, they sweep from floor to roof, gather the dirt in a worn-out gourd and throw it all onto the da-n-koun (1) of the quarter. To do this they

1. Da-n-koun, corner of land formed by paths that cross, hence outside the village.

form a procession; an old hag marches in front, brandishing the broom, and, half dancing and half walking, they all shout:

"Fari ô, fari doun ka di

765 Malakou, salakou
Fari ɔ, fari doun ka di." (2)

2. A song heard in Bani country. Since these songs are often improvised, they differ from one region to another.

Translation: "Ah! how pleasant it is to eat mashed beans (fari) and to eat all one's fill, ah! how pleasant it is to eat mashed beans!"

The excised daughters and grandaughters of the deceased wear mourning for about eight to ten days. During this time they stay in the b'lon, or entry hut, and spin cotton. The only noteworthy fact [513, 514] is that they all sleep in the same hut and attend to the wants of nature at set times, going to the bush evening and morning in Indian file with white veils on their heads. For the whole moon following the [293] death, the wife (the wives if the old man was polygamous) of the deceased wear sandals of goatskin and go out dressed only in white.

At the end of the moon, the wives of the deceased become the 758 property of the head of the family, who makes them his own or gives 562 them to his circumcised children (3). Some freedom is left to them, 428

3. Brothers succeed brothers. If there are no brothers, the oldest son inherits. If the deceased is younger than the brother who inherits, the latter possesses the wives but may not enjoy them. If the heir is the son of the deceased, all the father's or grandfather's wives belong to him, and he may enjoy them all except his mother.

for they can ransom themselves if they wish, and for the old and worn, difficulties are soon smoothed away. If the new family head is without a brother and without children or if he is older than the deceased,